

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

November 14, 2006

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November 17 - 19, 2006
www.justicefilmfestival.ca

GRASSROOTS GROUP LAUNCHES NEW FILM FESTIVAL

Local and International "Celebrities" to Attend

Calgary, Alberta - Calgarians are launching a unique new film festival aimed at encouraging filmgoers to take action. The Marda Loop Justice Film Festival presents inspiring international documentaries run over three days from November 17 - 19. The organizers hope the films and other features of the festival will encourage people to explore what's going on in the world of social justice and human rights.

"We've combined the films with extended learning opportunities," says Jenny Krabbe, the festival's founder. "Instead of simply watching some great films, we're hoping filmgoers will walk away motivated to take action."

The festival will include informal discussions following each film and a panel discussion. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Amnesty International and Citizens for Public Justice will be on site in the "NGO Village" to provide more information about international grassroots humanitarian groups and resources to those who are motivated to take action.

"We're very excited to have people with some connection to the films participate in the festival," says Krabbe.

Carmen Duran, one of the women featured in the Mexican film *Maquilapolis* will participate in the panel discussion, as will Dave Taylor, local MLA for Calgary-Currie and deputy leader of the Alberta Liberals. An anonymous donor offered to fly Ms. Duran, a factory worker and recently trained filmmaker, to Calgary from Tijuana to highlight labour violations and environmental devastation in Mexican factories.

The festival will feature the Calgary premiere of *Bunso: The Youngest*, a Filipino documentary both disturbing and empathetic in its focus on child convicts in a Manila jail. In addition, *Emanuel's Gift*, a film that challenges perceptions of disabled people, will be introduced by Gary McPherson, a leadership candidate for the Alberta Conservative Party, who routinely dispels those perceptions.

"These films," says Krabbe, "bring to light injustices and indignities suffered in this world, share stories of hope, and have the power to inspire, disturb, and motivate people."

All nine films in the inaugural Marda Loop Justice Film Festival will be screened in the 500-seat auditorium of the First Christian Reformed Church (3818 - 14A Street SW). This is a free, non-denominational event. A full screening schedule is available at the Festival's website: www.justicefilmfestival.ca